

# The SWORD of the LORD

Edited by JOHN R. RICE.

"And they cried, The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." Judges 7:20

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## The Precious Blood

BY T. M. OLSON

The Scriptures vs. Mrs. Eddy  
Science and Health says: "The material blood of Jesus was no more efficacious to cleanse from sin when it was shed upon the 'accursed tree,' than when it was flowing in His veins as He went daily about His Father's business." — 1908 Edition, Page 25, Line 6.

The Bible says: "For this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." — Matt. 26:28.

"Without shedding of blood is no remission." — Heb. 9:22.

Dear reader, carefully consider the above statements regarding the blood of the Lord Jesus. You will discover a very striking contrast — yea, a palpable contradiction. Both cannot be true, therefore the very nature of the case necessitates a choice. Your eternal weal or woe depends upon the attitude you assume toward the "precious blood of Christ." (I Pet. 1:18-21).

In Mrs. Eddy's estimation the shedding of the blood of Christ amounts to nothing; whereas, in God's reckoning, it means everything. The "life of all flesh is the blood thereof." (Lev. 17:14). The shedding of the blood speaks of the laying down of that life in sacrifice. Had an Israelite merely tak-

en a living lamb and fastened it by a cord to the door of the house wherein he lived, there was no assurance from God that his first-born would escape the sword of the destroying angel as he passed through the land of Egypt that night (read Exodus 12). It was not "blood in the veins" that God desired to see, but "blood on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses." It was essential that the blood be shed and sprinkled to assure the safety of the firstborn. The Scriptures mention a "must needs be" in connection with the sacrifice of Christ; plainly teaching that it is not the "blood in His veins," but His "shed" blood that avails. In other words, it is not the life which He lived but the death which He died that saves the believer from the doom of his sins. The Lord Jesus said: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life." (Jn. 3:14 and 15). Again we read: "Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead." (Acts 17:3).

It was the shed blood of the lamb that made the difference between Abel and Cain (Heb. 11:4) and between the Israelites and the Egyptians (Exo. 12:13). It is the shed blood of the Lamb of God that marks the difference between the Saved and Lost now, and that will differentiate between the song of the redeemed in Heaven and the wail of the damned in Hell. (Rev. 5:9 and 10).

The precious shed blood of Jesus Christ is that which procures every blessing which the Christian enjoys. It is

THE POWER OF OUR SANCTIFICATION. — Heb. 13:12.

Wherefore Jesus, also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate.

THE PLEDGE OF OUR BLESSING. — Luke 22:20.

This cup is the New Testament in My blood which is shed for you. THE PRICE OF OUR PURCHASE. — Acts 20:28.

The church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood.

THE LIBERTY OF OUR ACCESS. — Heb. 10:19.

Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.

THE THEME OF OUR PRAISE. — Rev. 5:9.

Unto Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.

THE CERTAINTY OF OUR OVERCOMING. — Rev. 12:11.

And they overcome Him by the blood of the Lamb.

THE GROUND OF OUR PEACE. — Col. 1:20.

Having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself.

THE CHANNEL OF OUR FORGIVENESS. — Eph. 1:7.

In whom we have redemption through His blood the forgiveness of sins.

THE MEANS OF OUR CLEANSING. — I John 1:7.

The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin.

Do not allow Mrs. Eddy or anyone else to rob you, dear reader, of these matchless blessings which are yours to enjoy "through faith in His blood." (Rom. 3:25).

## THE BACKSLIDER

BY EVANGELIST JOHN R. RICE

- I. WHAT IS A BACKSLIDER?
- II. WHY PEOPLE BACKSLIDE; THE OLD ADAMIC NATURE
- III. THE SORROWS OF BACKSLIDING
- IV. BACKSLIDERS; SAVED OR LOST?
- V. HOW TO GET BACK TO FULL FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

"The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways." — Proverbs 14:14.

"Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts." — Jeremiah 2:19.

Christians sin. Some of the saintliest of God's people have fallen into outrageous sin. And that has puzzled honest hearts, and has been the sneer of the wicked down thru the ages.

Infidels who hate the Bible have claimed that God's Book is immoral because it tells frankly of the frailties and sins of the saints of God. But really only God could write a book like that, honestly telling, without excuse, without glossing over, the constant downward tendency in the human race, revealed even in the saintliest char-

acters. Men who write books about their heroes make much of their good points and gloss over or excuse their sins and failures. Men who write books about their enemies make much of their sins and failures and gloss over their good qualities. But the Bible, written by an honest and holy God, simply tells the truth about mankind. We are a race of sinners, and the best men who ever lived still sinned.

The problem of sin is still present with Christians, as real as when they were unsaved. Everywhere I go I find defeated Christians, sad Christians who fear that God has forsaken them, or who doubt that they were ever saved. The problem of backsliding is ever with us, and so I have prepared this Bible message to show what is a backslider, why people backslide, the sorrows and punishment of backsliding, to show that the true backslider is really saved, and to show how any Christian who has fallen into sin can get back into full fellowship with God and have the joy of his salvation restored.

### I. What Is a Backslider?

A backslider is a saved person who falls into sin. A lost sinner cannot be a backslider. You have to go somewhere before you can slide back. But one who is truly born again, a child of God, and falls into sin is a backslider. It may be outrageous and gross sin known to everyone, or it may be merely coldness of the heart, a lukewarmness of the heart instead of the burning fire of love for God, but when a Christian loses any of his joy, or loses part of his sweet fellowship with God, or falls into sin, then he is a backslider. Remember

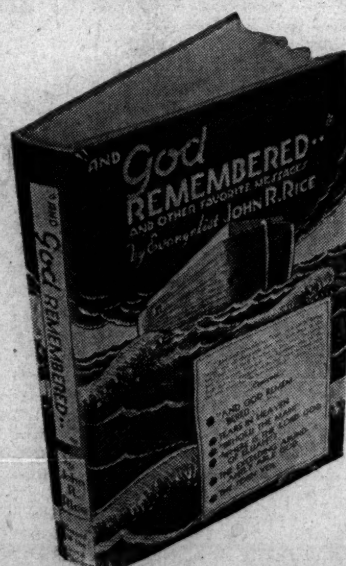
that only Christians are backsliders.

We have many examples of this in the Bible. What an honest book the Bible is, to tell us of the failures and sins of God's people thru the ages! God wanted us to know that the men He used the most, the men of the greatest faith, saints who had truly been born again, were frail people like we are and subject to the same temptations, surrendering sometimes to the same sins.

God tells how Noah got drunk and lay naked in his tent. He tells how Lot sought the fellowship of the wicked Sodomites, lost all his influence, and got drunk and ruined his own daughters. The Bible tells how Abraham deceived, calling Sarah his sister. Even saintly Moses lost his temper and when God commanded him to speak to the rock that Israel might be watered from it a second time, in a temper he beat upon it with his rod and so dishonored God that he lost his chance to enter the Promised Land, going to Heaven instead. David, a man after God's own heart, a man used to write the Psalms, that blessed book of devotions for the saints through all these centuries, committed adultery with Bathsheba and then had her husband, Uriah, slain to hide his sin. The Bible tells how Samson, a judge of Israel, who had been filled with the Holy Ghost and was a Nazarite from his birth, kept company with harlots until God left him powerless, a slave of the Philistines with his eyes burned out. The Bible tells how Peter denied Christ and cursed and swore, and how all the disciples forsook Him and fled; how later Peter played the coward again, and led even good Barnabas away with his dissimulations, fearing the Jewish Christians. The Bible tells how Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, was a coward, a secret disciple. Even Paul the apostle went up to Jerusalem against the plain leading of the Holy Spirit. So the

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## Blessing Thousands!



The above pictured Book, "And God Remembered . . ." And Other Favorite Messages by Evangelist John R. Rice, is blessing thousands of readers. Although little more than a year old, 35,000 copies have been printed; 10,000 in cloth; 5,000 in paper. The messages are the very choicest, full of Scripture, full of the tender presence of the Holy Spirit. They will comfort and strengthen Christians, they will save sinners. A number of people have written to say that they were led to trust in Christ and found sweet salvation as they read these messages. And literally hundreds of letters have come from Christians comforted in sorrow, strengthened in faith, Christians who learned more of the Word of God as they read these sermons.

Here are the messages:

1. "And God Remembered . . ." This sermon tells how God remem-

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## Editor at Dallas

From Philadelphia with the Morning Cheer Broadcast and Tent Services, The Editor Has Gone to Dallas in Open Air Revival Campaign, Celebrating the Tenth Anniversary of the Church He Founded in 1932, and of Which He Was Pastor 7½ Years

Sunday night, July 19th, we closed the service in a tent campaign at Haddon Heights, New Jersey, under the Morning Cheer Broadcast, both conducted by Dr. George A. Palmer. That strong work led by Dr. Palmer is being greatly blessed of God. The Morning Cheer Center at Wrightstown, New Jersey, adjacent to Fort Dix, is doing a blessed work among soldiers, with an average of more than a thousand soldiers a day coming into the center for free coffee, cakes, fruit, to play games, read good literature or write letters home. They have personal workers and special music and of course gospel services twice a week and about a hundred soldiers profess faith in Christ every month. Dear pastor Palmer has just recently been granted the doctor's degree by the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. He was guest speaker in The Church of the Open Door. He certainly deserves that honor for the blessedness of that work.

In the fall Dr. Homer Hammon-tree, head of the music department in Moody Bible Institute, will have leave of absence from Moody for some months to head the work among soldiers at Wrightstown for Dr. Palmer. Dr. Harry Rimmer, Dr. James McGinley, and others are also helping on the field, in the Morning Cheer Center, and in other army camps under Dr. Palmer's direction.

It was a blessed time of fellowship with Dr. Palmer and his workers with a twice daily broadcast on different stations, with meetings in their Morning Cheer Auditorium at noon, and in the tent

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## They're Dear to God

Oh that when Christians meet and part,  
These words were graven on every heart —  
They're dear to God!  
However willful and unwise,  
We'll look on them with loving eyes —  
They're dear to God!  
Oh, wonder! — to the Eternal One,  
Dear as His own beloved Son;  
Dearest to Jesus than His blood,  
Dear as the Spirit's fixed abode —  
They're dear to God!

When tempted to give pain for pain,  
How would this thought our words restrain,  
They're dear to God!  
When truth compels us to contend,  
What love with all our strife should blend!  
They're dear to God!  
When they would shun the pilgrims' lot  
For this vain world, forget them not;  
But win them back with love and prayer,  
They never can be happy there,  
If dear to God.

Shall we be there, so near, so dear,  
And be estranged and cold whilst here —  
All dear to God?  
By the same cares and toils oppress,  
We lean upon one faithful Breast,  
We hasten to the same repose;  
How bear or do enough for those  
So dear to God!

(Enclosed in a letter from dear Dr. H. A. Ironside)



# THE BACKSLIDER

(Continued from page one)

saints of the Bible fell into sin; they were backsliders.

These examples should humble us and teach us that even the mightiest of God's saints sometimes backslide, fall into sin, and so lose the sweet joy that every Christian ought to have. A Christian who backslides is just like a child who disobeys his parents. It does not affect his sonship but it affects his fellowship, his joy, and the approval of the father.

But it is well to note there are some in the Bible who did not backslide. For example, Adam, when he fell into sin in the Garden of Eden, was not a backslider. He had never been born again. He had never been saved, and so could not backslide. In the Garden of Eden he had been created a perfect man, and had perfect fellowship with God as one of His creatures, made in His image. But he had not been redeemed by blood. Up to that time in the Bible blood had never been mentioned as a remedy for sin. There had never been an animal sacrifice picturing the coming of the Saviour. There had never been a gospel message nor any need of one. There had never been a prophecy of the coming Saviour. Adam, as a sinless being in the Garden of Eden, like Eve his wife, was not a Christian. He was simply a perfect man, as she was a perfect woman. When Adam fell into sin and ate the forbidden fruit, he was not a backslider. He was simply, for the first time, a poor lost sinner who had never been converted, who had never been born into God's family, who had never been born again, who had never been redeemed by the blood.

And so fallen angels are not backsliders. Angels in Heaven are perfect and sinless and have fellowship with God, but they are not Christians. Angels who have never been saved and given everlasting life as forgiven sinners, cannot backslide.

Judas Iscariot was not a backslider. In John chapter 6, verses 64, 70 and 71, we are plainly told that Judas did not believe in Christ, was not saved but was a devil. "But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him . . . Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve." Judas heard the preaching of Jesus and never repented. He was a moral man, trusted by the disciples, who evidently depended on his morality and would not turn to Jesus in saving faith. At last he fell into grossest sin, betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. But Judas was not a backslider. No one can be a backslider who has not first been a "frontslider." Only Christians, born-again children of God, are backsliders.

Strange as it may seem, all Christians backslide, for all Christians sin. In I John 1:8 we are plainly told, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Every Christian is taught to pray in the Lord's Prayer, that model prayer for all who can look up in the face of God and call Him, "Our Father which art in Heaven" — all real Christians are commanded to pray, daily, "And forgive us our sins" (Luke 11:4). All Christians sin, and that means that all Christians backslide.

When you remember that "the thought of foolishness is sin" (Proverbs 24:9), that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23), and that "to him that

knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17) then it becomes clear that all of us have fallen short even after we are saved. We have all had foolish thoughts, we have all done some things without any special faith about them, we have all left undone things that we knew were proper and right for us to do. Who is there that will say this moment that every minute of his life he loves God all he ought to, that he never prays a second less than you ought to pray, that he never leaves undone a single thing that God wants him to do? You cannot say that, and that is proof of sin.

Christians get old, their teeth decay, their hair turns gray or falls out, they grow decrepit in body, and finally, even Christians die; and that proves that sinners are Christians, for everywhere in the Bible we are told that death is the result of sin. Adam was warned that if he sinned "Thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:17). James 1:15 says that "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." And Ezekiel 18:4 says that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Romans 6:23 plainly says that "the wages of sin is death." Oh, we Christians are yet frail sinners, so it is clear that all Christians backslide. And that is the reason, of course, that God must save us by grace and keep us by grace. We did not earn salvation, and we cannot keep it. We did not deserve it when we got it and we do not deserve it now.

Dear reader, will you test yourself by this simple rule? Was there ever a time when you were nearer to God than now? Was there ever a happy time when you read the Bible more, or enjoyed it more? Was there ever a time when you prayed more, when you had your prayers answered more frequently? Was there ever a day that you won more souls than you have won today? Was there ever a time when you were more completely absorbed in the Lord's business? Then, of course, if there was ever a time when you were nearer the Lord than today, you are a backslider. You have slid back from that close intimacy with God, from that high place of blessing, which you once had.

Remember that the text, Proverbs 14:14, says, "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways." Backsliding is not necessarily in getting drunk or in committing adultery, nor in any outward course of sin seen by the public. Backsliding is in the heart!

It may be, dear Christian, that you have drifted somewhat and have never noticed it. You may be like Samson, who "wist not that the Lord was departed from him" (Judges 16:20). We need to search our hearts and we need to watch and pray lest sin creep up on us. Are you a backslider?

## II. Why People Backslide; The Old Adamic Nature

I well remember when I first became conscious of my backsliding. I had been saved when not over nine years old. I had trusted Christ to forgive me, and I am sure He did. Three years later I had joined the church, had been baptized, and had received full assurance my sins were forgiven. But my mother was dead, and my boyhood companions in that wild West Texas cow town were rough and wicked. And one day it dawned on me that I had drifted far from God in my heart. I had grieved Him in my life. I had gotten to where prayer was not a joy, the Bible was not sweet.

I was attending special services in a little Presbyterian Church. As many young people found Christ, and many Christians had their joy restored, I alone seemed left without a blessing. How sweet was the singing! What a light on the faces of the happy people! And one night as they sang,

"Pass me not, O gentle Saviour,  
Hear my humble cry.  
While on others thou art calling,  
Do not pass me by."

I cried out, "Lord, is everybody going to get a blessing but me? Do not pass me by!" And, thank God, all the joy came back and peace flooded my soul! I knew that my failures, my sins, had been forgiven. It was as definite as if my father had taken me in his arms and kissed away my tears and told me so!

That night as I walked home across the prairie, and looked up

at the stars, I made a vow to God. I said, "Oh, God, I will never fail you again! I will never forget my prayer time, I will never give way to temptation and sin!" You may well smile; I think that maybe a loving and kindly God smiled at my great promises that night. How well He knew my sinful nature, my frailty and sin!

It was not more than two weeks before I had sinned, in a way that shocked me terribly, though I do not now remember the details. I found my joy gone. And when I went to God in prayer to confess my sins, again I made great promises. "God, I failed you this time, but if you will give me one more chance I will not fail you again. I promise you I will be more faithful, I will be true this time, if you will only try me once more!" How little I knew that God wanted trust instead of promises, and that He wanted me to depend upon Him instead of myself. But He gave me sweet peace again.

But the tragic story was repeated until, in despair, I felt I had lied to God, had failed Him, and that He must be so disappointed in me He would never trust me any more, and would never give me back the joy of His presence. And then at long last I learned the lesson, that I have an evil nature, as well as a new nature which is from God. Like every child of God I am two persons in one. I am the old man I was before I was saved, with a human body and human frailty and a human tendency toward sin, and I am also a new creature in Christ who loves the Lord and hates sin. And I learned that God knows all about me, and that what He wants me to do is to come regularly to confess my sins and earnestly turn from them, depending on His never-failing mercy to forgive and cleanse, as He promised to do.

So the reason that people backslide is this old carnal nature that even the saints of God have. The best person who ever lived had a constant tendency toward sin, ever since Adam fell, and with him the whole race. It is easier to do wrong than it is to do right. It is easier to tell a lie than to tell the truth. Honest, good people have to watch themselves continually to be accurate and truthful in their speech and to avoid deceit. It is easier to loaf than it is to work. The best Christians in the world have to watch themselves and set themselves to work diligently to do their duty. It is easier to get angry than it is to be even-tempered and forgiving and sweet. Even Christians have to "count ten" before they speak sometimes, and how often we have, with shame, to confess that we have sinned with a sharp tongue or a critical spirit.

The book of Hosea is a book on backsliding. There the prophet speaks of Israel often as if the nation were an individual who had gone away from God. And in Hosea 4:16 he says, "Israel slideth back as a back-sliding heifer." In Hosea 6:1 he says, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us, he hath smitten, and he will bind us up." And then Hosea 11:7 says, "And my people are bent to backsliding from me."

**BENT TO BACKSLIDING!** God's people are bent to backsliding from Him, says the Word of God. Oh, how true that is, of every one of us!

That blessed old song, "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" has the revealing heart-cry of every Christian who ever found himself a backslider. It says,

"Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;  
Prone to leave the God I love!"

The modernists do not like that and have changed it in some song books, but it is still true that all of the people of God are prone to wander. We are prone to leave the God that we love. We are "bent to backsliding," as God's Word puts it.

An old proverb says that "As the twig is bent, the tree's inclined." And all of us were bent when we were twigs. We were bent before we were born! We were bent away from God by nature when Adam fell. And not until Christians get a resurrected body with no more disease, no more gray hairs, no more weakness, will we have our old, carnal natures perfectly redeemed, and the curse entirely removed.

Holiness people sometimes claim that the old carnal nature has been eradicated in them, the fire of God has burned it all out. And yet, strangely enough, they too, back-

slide! At Des Moines, Iowa, a poor sad man attended my services who told me he had been a Holiness preacher, but was at the time living in the grossest sin, and did not even claim to be a Christian. The facts belied his doctrine. The carnal nature had not been taken away. Thank God, we can have day by day victory over the carnal nature by judging self, confessing our sins, and having daily cleansing; but we still have the carnal nature, and that is why people backslide.

The struggle all real Christians have today, Paul had, too. It is told in Romans 7:14-25, as follows:

"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." (Rom. 7:14-25).

Paul, as a Christian, did things he didn't want to do, ought not to have done. With his mind he served the law of God, but with his flesh the law of sin. Even in the last verse quoted above where Paul could thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord for the possibility of deliverance, he followed that statement by this, "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Paul did not condone his sin and neither should we. Paul knew that he could have daily victory over it, and so can we. But we must not deny the presence of this old sinful nature. We need constantly to be on our guard, and we need to be continually confessing and forsaking our sin to have daily cleansing and to keep on walking in the light.

And Christians who understand this truth can understand the further truth in the eighth chapter, where Paul looked forward so grandly to the glory that should be revealed, for "the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." And then he tells how the creature shall one day be delivered from this bondage of corruption into glorious liberty, and that the whole creation groans together, waiting for the redemption, to wit the adoption, of our bodies (Romans 8:18-23).

Christian, do you find yourself "bent to backsliding?" Then you are like Paul and like every other born-again child of God. But thank God there is victory for you thru Christ, as I will show you soon.

## III. The Sorrows of Backsliding

Jeremiah 2:19 says, "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts." Oh, the trouble that comes to the backslider in heart. And again, Proverbs 14:14 says, "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways." How many, many people have told me that their backsliding brought them only grief and trouble, and that they had enough of it!

First, the backslider is sure of the chastising of God. God still hates sin, and He has promised to chasten His beloved when they sin. Hebrews 12:5, 6 tells us, "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord nor

faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." And verse 11 in the same chapter tells us, "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." And so God whips every backslider, and does it in love, does it to correct their backsliding and to bring "the peaceable fruit of righteousness" in His children.

I love my children, and I love them so much I want them to do right and be happy and succeed in the Christian life. So sometimes I whip them for their disobedience. It is painful, but it is done in love and for their good, and at the last it "yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness."

For David's sin, God smote his child, and it died. One son, Amnon, raped his sister, Tamar. Then Absalom killed Amnon, then grew embittered and tried to seize the kingdom from David. David paid fourfold for his sin. David did not lose his soul. When David confessed his sin, God's message came to him, "And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die." David was a backslider. And God forgave his backsliding, but still punished him for his sin.

And when the saints at Corinth got drunk at the Lord's Table, or made an unseemly feast of it, and when there were divisions and strife among them which they did not confess and forsake, the Lord had Paul write to them, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." (I Cor. 11:30). For their sins some were weak and sickly, and some had already died and gone to heaven prematurely, because of their sin! God punishes the sins of His Christians.

It is apparent that God is more determined to punish the sins of Christians than the sins of lost people. For lost people will go to Hell forever and there will suffer for their sins. But God must be just, and the only time He can punish His own in actual chastising, we suppose, is in this world. So like a faithful father who chastises his disobedient children but loves them still, so God punishes the backslider.

Beside the personal chastising of a loving Father, the backslider reaps the natural wages of his sin. When a Christian gets drunk, he wastes his money and wakes up with a headache, and is just as apt to lose his job or to break up his home as a lost man. Sin never paid anybody, and it never will! What a trail of trouble followed Lot's sin! He lost all his property in Sodom, all but two of his children were burned to death in that wicked city. His wife was turned to a pillar of salt. A broken man, he lived in a cave in the mountains, and then got drunk and ruined his own daughters, who still had the ways of Sodom in their hearts! That is what backsliding can do for the child of God. If you have tasted it, you know that the dregs of the cup are bitter and that "thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee." Surely, if you have been a backslider, you have found that "it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God." If one reads this who is persistent in going away from God, and who is not yet ready to turn and beg forgiveness and cleansing, I warn you now, a hard, rough, bitter, sad road is ahead of you — the backslider's way.

Again, the backslider will have remorse of conscience over his sins.

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EVANGELIST JOHN R. RICE  
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

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## THE BACKSLIDER

(Continued from page two)

If you have truly been saved, then you love Christ and you love God. If you are truly a child of God there is something in you that rebels against your sins. When you were a lost man you may have enjoyed sin, but now that you are God's child the cup of sin will turn bitter to your taste before the drink is well down.

Can you see, in your mind, Peter going out to weep bitterly after his denial of Christ? He quit the ministry and went back to fishing, and was almost in despair until he met Jesus again by the Sea of Galilee and had his joy restored.

Read the fifty-first Psalm that shows the broken-hearted David after his sin with Bathsheba. Hear him cry, begging to be cleansed, "For I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me." The sense of his blood-guiltiness, his soul-realization of the wickedness of his nature, is made clear in every verse of that Psalm, and he pleads, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation! and uphold me with thy free spirit." And when God will give him the assurance of forgiveness and cleansing, David promises, "My tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness!" Some of you who read this have known as I have, the broken heart that David had over his own sins. Oh,

the burning conscience of a backslider!

At Gary, Indiana, a few months ago, a man came down the aisle at the invitation time to say, "Five years I have been a backslider! Oh, Brother Rice, five years is a long time to be away from home!" and he broke into weeping. Well, I wouldn't stay away any longer. I would come home today, poor backslider, for it is a sad, bitter business, when you have known the joy of salvation, the presence of God, the sweetness of enjoying the Bible and of answered prayer — I say it is a bad business then to lose all that joy and not be able to see the face of the God you love. The poor prodigal boy in the hog-pen, dreaming about the plenty at home while he perished with hunger, a stranger, half naked, and despised in a far land, knew the sorrows that a child of God has who sins and falls away from the sweet communion and joy which every Christian has a right to have.

And last of all, let us remember, that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Even when we get to Heaven we will be sad that we were backsliders. And there we will have to stand before Christ and give an account for our deeds. Even in Heaven the backslider will be ashamed that he drifted away from full fellowship with the Saviour and with his heavenly Father. When his works are burned up, he will "be saved so as by fire" and will "suffer loss" (I Cor. 3:12-14).

### IV. Backsliders; Saved or Lost?

Everywhere people want to know whether the backslider is saved or lost. After one has sinned, is he still a child of God? When he has lost the joy of salvation, does he still have the salvation?

Well, the answer to this question is that the backslider does not deserve to be saved, but deserves

to go to Hell; that other people will often think that he is not saved; that he himself is likely to doubt his salvation or to believe that God has forsaken him utterly; but, thank God, the backslider still is a child of God. He is a disobedient child of God, and he will be punished for it, yet every born-again child of God who falls into sin is still God's child.

It is true that the backslider does not deserve salvation. What a tragedy when a child of God brings reproach on the cause of Christ. It may be an outrageous sin, like drunkenness or adultery, sins like those of those other backsliders, Noah, Lot, David. Or it may be a backsliding in the heart that does not seem so bad to outsiders but really results in damning souls that might have been won. Who knows whether, in God's sight, a cold heart that does not win souls and never has the anointing for power, may be more wicked than the man who is tempted and falls into drink or blasphemy or adultery? What could be worse than letting a soul go to Hell for millions of years because of our carelessness, our love for the things of this life? But in either case the backslider deserves nothing good from God. That means that I ought to have gone to Hell long ago! How many times I have failed God! How many vows I have broken, how many duties I have neglected! But then the same thing could be said about every Christian in the world. We deserve nothing good from God. No one does. It would have served us right for Him to let us all go to Hell.

But thanks be to God, my salvation is not depending upon my works. I did not deserve salvation when I got it. I have never deserved it any thirty seconds since that time! Salvation is all of grace. How sweet to all of us poor sinners is Ephesians 2:8, 9. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." And when we get to Heaven there will not be one living soul who can say, "I deserved this. I earned my way to Heaven." No, how our hearts will run over with gratitude and rejoicing when we say there that

"Jesus paid it all

All to Him I owe.

Sin had left a crimson stain,

He washed it white as snow."

And that is as true of my life today as it was the first day I trusted Jesus as my Saviour. Oh, thank God for his mercy that never fails. He saves every sinner who trusts in Him and he keeps every one of his erring children. He chastises them but he does not lose them.

Not only does the backslider not deserve his salvation, but others will often judge him and think that he is not saved. My, if I had seen Noah lying drunk, and naked in his tent, I might have said, "You old hypocrite, God ought to have let you die in the flood with the rest of the drunkards." I would have thought, perhaps, that there was no difference in Noah lying there drunk and another man which I saw two days ago lying drunk outside a saloon in Philadelphia.

I think my indignation would have mounted high against David, if I had been there and had known how he seduced Bathsheba and had her husband killed. I might well have thought "You hypocrite, you psalm-singing sinner! You pious adulterer and murderer! You ought to be in Hell!" and if I had been the judge I would probably have sent David on to Hell. And so with Lot, down in Sodom, calling those wicked, licentious wretches "brethren." And so with Peter when he cursed and denied that he even knew Christ. Doubtless I would have thought he was unconverted. And if God had left it to me. I might have sent these backsliders on to Hell. Certainly, I would have doubted their sincerity when they told me that they loved God. Oh, but I would not have known the agony in David's heart which later found expression in the pleading confession of the fifty-first Psalm! And I could not have known the distress of soul in Peter as, weeping bitterly, he went out into the cool morning of that spring day when he denied the Saviour! And I could not have known that Lot "vexed his righteous soul day by day with their unlawful deeds" down in Sodom. The backslider in heart still has in him the voice of God, still has dwelling in him the Spirit of God, and is still God's

## Revival Engagements of Evangelist

### William H. Rice

July 28th - August 9th: independent tent campaign, Gilman, Iowa.

August 16-30th: Waveland Baptist Church, Waveland, Indiana, Rev. Homer H. Edmore, pastor.

August 31st-September 13th: Morgan Township Christian Church near Valparaiso, Indiana.

September 20th-October 11th: Independent Baptist Church of Silver Creek and Ocqueoc Christian Assembly, Ocqueoc, Michigan.

October 18th-November 1st: Gospel Temple, Rensselaer, Indiana, Rev. Chester A. Doden, pastor.

"Brother Bill" as we call him (brother of the editor) sponsored by the Sword of the Lord, has just closed a campaign at Endicott, New York, then at Sandusky, New York. Concerning happy conversions at Endicott, he writes the editor as follows:

"I was so happy to see Mr. and Mrs. Page saved. You know I stayed in their home, and neither of them had ever been converted. They are lovely folks and I enjoyed being with them ever so much. For the first week, they did not come to church but finally, the first Sunday night, she was saved. He was there, too, and felt rather hurt that she had been saved. Felt she had doublecrossed him! He told her that now that they had raised their children, had a good job and a nice home, he had looked forward to having so many good times, but now she had to go and get 'religion!' He really was deeply disturbed. So much so that on the Fourth he got dead drunk and had to be carried home! The last night of the meeting, he consented to come near me preach my last sermon, for he did like me. But that night when I gave the invitation, he was so mad that he raved, she told me later, all the way home. I was using a bar tender's tactics in persuading and urging people to be saved — over-persuading them when they really didn't want to. He was so mad that he couldn't go to sleep and they stayed awake until two o'clock in the morning talking. But finally, when he had cooled off, he admitted to his wife that he had a guilty conscience, that he knew he, too, ought to be a Christian. And he settled it before he went to sleep.

"The next morning, his wife and he were at the breakfast table waiting for me, and they were both smiling and laughing like a couple of little kids. I suspected the truth, and when I asked him if he was also trusting in Christ for salvation and forgiveness of sins, he grinned, nodded his head, and said, 'I be.'"

"Dear Bro. Rice:

I read your paper first when you were in Princeton, Ill., last summer and of recent months have taken it and I seldom ever retire for the night before reading every word of it, on the day of its arrival. There is more to it than any paper I've ever taken or read — regardless of size. I hope some day yours is enlarged. I like to preserve each copy for future use." Mrs. I — M. R., Champaign, Illinois.

child. Others will criticize and judge him and think him unsaved.

Even the backslider himself may feel that he is unsaved. In the first chapter of II Peter we are urged to add certain graces that we will not be as backsliders, barren and unfruitful. And verse nine says: "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins." How many Christians have forgotten that they were purged from their old sins. There are many, no doubt, who give up their hope.

I remember when I gave mine up. When I asked to join the church after my profession of faith my father thought I was too young to be saved and discouraged me. I threw all my hope away. And for three years I had no joy, no assurance of salvation. And many a man tells me "Well, I thought I was saved once, but I guess I was not." And a letter came this week from a good woman who told me of her temper, her harsh words to her husband and children, of grudges that arose in her heart. She said:

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## Blessing Thousands

(Continued from page one)

bered Noah in the flood, remembered Abraham, remembered Rachel, remembered Hannah, remembered His covenant with Israel, His mercy, His promises. God remembers our frailties and God remembers the sin of the wicked. But thank God, for those who trusted in Christ, He will remember their sins and iniquities no more!

II. *Tears in Heaven.* How strange! Yet this chapter shows how there will be tears in Heaven over our sins on earth; tears of shame, tears of terror, tears of loss; that there will be tears over the failure of Christians left on earth, over lost sinners who will not be saved, and at last over the last sinners to leave the great white throne judgment to go to Hell! A tender, moving message with startling truth most people never knew.

III. *"Behold the Man."* The humanity of Jesus, how He was tempted in all points like as we, how He knows every heartache, every frailty, how His work was done as a man, and how He took man's place on the cross. This sermon is a favorite of many, but you will have to read it to appreciate it.

IV. *"Where Is the Lord God of Elijah?"* What faith Elisha had! He demanded of God that he should have a double portion of the power of the Spirit that was on Elijah! When Elijah's mantle fell on him, he smote the water of the River Jordan and said, "Where Is the Lord God of Elijah?" and the waters opened up. He did sixteen great miracles to eight that Elijah did. This chapter will strengthen your faith, will show how Elijah's God still lives today, still answers prayer for those who believe Him and expect great things.

V. *The Exceeding Abundantly Able God.* A rich message on the way God goes beyond all we can ask or think, His exceeding abundantly able power and love to answer our prayers and fill our needs. Discouraged Christian, this is what you need.

VI. *The Torn Vail.* How, when Jesus died, the vail of the temple was torn in two from the top to bottom, symbolizing thus that every barrier between God and man is torn down. This shows that men no longer need to try to atone for their own sins since Christ has made the peace offering; how we need no more priests but Jesus; how the vilest sinner may come. Rich in Scripture teaching, tender devotional reading for the Christian and the way of salvation made wonderfully clear to the sinner. Numbers have been saved through this message.

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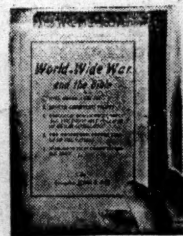
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## THE BACKSLIDER

(Continued from page three)

"Could I be a Christian and be like this?" So backsliders lose the joy of salvation and lose the assurance of salvation too. And how many decide that God has forsaken them. They know that they were once saved, but now that they have fallen into sin they do not have any joy. They feel that God does not love them any more. Only day before yesterday a sad-faced woman came to tell me how she had been so preoccupied and had so neglected prayer and the Lord's Word that she felt perhaps she had committed the unpardonable sin! In fact, of scores of people who have come to me wondering if they have committed the unpardonable sin, I think that not one of them had, but all were backslidden Christians. If a

### Editor at Dallas

(Continued from page one)

at night. Souls were saved and God is specially blessing the broadcasts.

We closed the Sunday night meeting under the tent at 9:00 p.m. July 19, I was rushed through the traffic to the North Philadelphia Pennsylvania Station, caught the train at 10:02 for St. Louis. I arrived at St. Louis Monday night about 6:30, with the train an hour and forty-five minutes late. There Mrs. Rice and my six daughters were waiting, and we set out by automobile for Texas, arriving in Dallas at 6:15 p.m. Tuesday.

The Galilean Baptist Church, under Dr. Robert J. Wells, had made blessed and strong preparation for the revival campaign. A big paved lot beside the church was seated and lighted and great crowds have assembled for these four nights of the first week. Ten years ago I came to Dallas, led of God, to found this church and for seven and a half happy and (by God's grace) fruitful years we lived in Dallas. Thousands of souls were saved. The church grew to 14,000 members. Now the mother church has daughter churches in several parts of Dallas, and the people gather from many miles for these services on the 10th anniversary of the church's birth. How sweet it was to see old friends. Many men embraced me and many women wept over me, and I am frank to say that I wept, too, for joy over seeing old friends again.

Last night was the first invitation. One boy came to claim Christ, several came with tears to confess and forsake their backsliding. One man came saying, "I am called to preach and I have already begun my ministry, but I am at enmity with my brothers, and we haven't had anything to do with each other for ten years. I am largely to blame. I am starting the letter now. Pray that God will save them and that God will take every hindrance out of my life so I can have revivals in my church. A young man came saying, "I am going to the Navy in a few days, and I'm not right with God. I feel I must get this settled before I go." He did get it happily settled. A boy came saying, "I'm a member of a church but I don't think I'm saved. I want to be saved tonight." A mother came saying with trembling lips, "I am a failure. My three children are not living for God and I am the blame." And a night or two ago, though there was no invitation a lost man came to the front to meet me with his wife who has only been a Christian four months. He had a tender heart and soon was happily converted.

The evening service was followed by a time of prayer lasting to 2:00 a.m. Forty-eight were present at midnight, and nineteen stood in a circle and sang, "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" before we left. How our hearts were refreshed! We are expecting a blessed pouring-out of the Holy Spirit and many souls saved, Sunday night and in the two weeks following. Services will continue here through Friday, August 7, God willing.

It is our special joy to broadcast with Brother W. E. Hawkins, Jr., on the Radio Revival services over KRLD, the 50,000-watt station in Dallas, eight or ten times during the campaign. Brother Hawkins is in the fourteenth year of his daily broadcast. We were happy to have fellowship also with Dr. Harlan J. Roper, pastor of the Scofield Memorial Church, who was with us in the studio.

man had really committed the unpardonable sin, he would not be worried about it. He would not hear God's Spirit calling. And the unpardonable sin, besides, is committed only by lost people. But backsliders often feel that God has forsaken them forever.

But thanks be to God that is not true. God never forsakes one of his own children, even though we sin grievously and though he may punish us severely. The backslider is still God's child and is still saved.

I have six daughters. Though they are precious children, and I love them dearly, all of them do wrong. Sometimes they have done so badly that I felt I must punish them severely. I have had to lay on the whip or a heavy leather belt while they cried and begged for another chance. It was not easy at all. But you may be sure that when the whipping was over they were still my children, my beloved. They never lose their place at the table or their bed in the home, nor the love of a father's heart when they do wrong. I punish my children when they need it but they are still my children.

And is God a poorer father than I am? Do you think God's love is weaker than a father's love for his children? Would God forsake one of his own quicker than a human parent would? How strange to ask such a question. It answers itself! God punishes his backslidden children and grieves over them but never forsakes them.

In Hosea, the book about backsliding Israel, is a precious word. In chapter 11, verse 7 says: "And my people are bent to backsliding from me." But now let us read the next two verses, Hosea 11:8, 9. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city."

Do you see the yearning heart of God after Ephraim and Israel? How would he be content to deal with them as with the wicked in Admah and Zeboim, the towns destroyed with Sodom and Gomorrah? In the midst of his chastizing God's heart was turned back toward Israel and he was repenting from even the punishment. And so God says: "I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man." God's love does not fail as a man's love fails. A mother may forsake her sucking child but God will not forsake a one of his own! A father might drive his wayward son from the door, but never will God drive one of his own away for he is God and not man. Men may criticize the backslider and judge him and say he is not saved, but God is not a man. His mercy is beyond human mercy. His love is greater than any human love.

How sweet is the promise of the Lord in Psalm 89 to David and his seed. In verses 30 to 34, he says:

"If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments;

"Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.

"Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.

"My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips."

If David and his descendants, the kings of Judah should break God's statutes and keep not his commandments, then God promised to visit their transgression with the rod of their iniquity with stripes; but God's lovingkindness he would never utterly take from these and God's faithfulness would not fail and God would never break his covenant nor change the thing he promised! That is the way God deals with men.

In my boyhood I remember hearing a cowboy preacher preach on that great text "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Romans 11:29). And that saintly but unlettered preacher went on to recount that in all his dealings with God he, the preacher, had never needed to repent of anything

God had done for him. He had never been sorry of any gift God had given him. I thought it was a great sermon, and it was, and when I commented to my Father on it he showed me that that man of God had missed the meaning entirely! God does not mean that we shall never repent of His gifts and His callings. Rather He promises that He will never repent, will never change, will never turn from one of His gifts and one of His callings. Oh, we who have been called of God to be saints, we who are his born again children, we who have the promise of everlasting life and a home in Heaven, may be sure that God will never repent in this matter. He will not change His calling nor take back his gift. For "the gifts and callings of God are without repentance."

The sins of the backslider are all laid on Jesus, are already blotted out, are already forgiven. When Jesus died He died for all my sins. When I trusted Him, I trusted Him for forgiveness for all of them, the sins of the future as well as those of the past. And so David cries exultantly "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Romans 4:7, 8). The backslider is a blessed man "unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works" (Romans 4:6).

Jesus promised that "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." The backslider deserves to be cast out, but he does not get what he deserves. God is faithful even when we are unfaithful. God keeps His covenant and fulfills all His guarantees.

God promised to all who believe in Christ "everlasting life" and "eternal life." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (John 3:36). Notice the "hath" which means "has." One who has trusted Christ already has everlasting life. And Jesus said in John 6:46: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." And John 5:24 says, that one who has trusted in Him has everlasting life and shall not ever come into condemnation but is already past out of death into life. Everlasting life is for the backslider, and all of us who have put our trust in Christ are at times backsliders, but we still have what God Himself gave us out of his own abundance, everlasting life!

The Holy Spirit lives in the body of every Christian. And when the Christian sins, that unease, that unrest, that conviction which he has is wrought in him by the blessed Holy Spirit who still goes with the backslider and never leaves him. The backslider is one of God's sheep and Jesus said "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (John 10: 27, 28). Bless God for that promise! The word *man* in this verse is spelled in italics in your Bible which means it was not in the original at all. Actually that verse says: "Neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." No man nor devil, not even self, can pluck a child of God, one of God's sheep, from His hand for he has already given it eternal life and such shall never perish, says He!

Oh, I want every backslider to remember that you have a place still in the Father's house! Arise from the hog pen of sin! Come back home for the father's kiss of forgiveness and the ring of assurance of sonship and the fatted calf of rejoicing! God loves you still! You are His own, dear to His heart, bought with the blood of His Son. He will not let you go!

In 1921 I read in a Chicago paper in the Personals column a classified ad that stirred my heart and I have never forgotten it. It ran about like this: "Emma, please come home. Mother is sick and is calling for you. All is forgiven. Dad." I do not know what poor girl had broken father's and mother's hearts, had gone down in sin with her wild companions, so that she felt a stranger at home and thought that they no longer loved her. But whoever she was and wherever she was, they loved her still. The sick mother's heart could not be comforted without her daughter, and the father paid for the ad in a million copies of a newspaper, longing for Emma to see it and know that she was still loved and was forgiven, and that they wanted her to come home. And, oh, backslider, I broadcast

this plea from the Father's house, that you are to come on home! God loves you still. His heart yearns over you, and He will never let you go! Oh, come on back from your wandering and make God's heart glad today!

### V. How to Get Back into Full Fellowship with God

If you are a backslider, then I have good news for you. The simplest and shortest part of this sermon is how to get back to God. Simply turn to God in your heart, confessing your sin and backsliding, and He will receive you with open arms and forgive you of all your sins and failures and mistakes.

In I John 1:9 is this sweet verse for Christians, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Isn't that simple? We simply confess our sins honestly, and when we do God is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us.

Notice the terms "faithful and just." What a strange saying about God! Why, that would seem as if God owed it to us to forgive us and cleanse us when we, His wayward children, confess our sin! A man is faithful when he keeps his promises, when he does his duty. Yes, and that is what God is. God is faithful and just to forgive us, when we confess our sin, our backsliding, because that is within God's bargain! The keeping, the forgiving, the cleansing, day by day, all is a part of God's covenant with us when we were saved. All that was purchased for us on Calvary, and is promised to every child of God, and so God simply keeps His promise faithfully. Every time we confess our sins, our backslidings, He quickly forgives them and cleanses us from them.

As a young preacher I preached on The Prodigal Son. I pictured the long hard way home. How tired the poor fellow was! How his feet hurt as he stumbled along the rocky road without any shoes! Would he ever get home? And would the father receive him or send him away with scorn? I had that poor prodigal boy plodding a long, painful way, back to the father's house. And then one day I discovered that I had made that up out of the whole cloth. It was not even hinted in that wonderful story as Jesus told it in Luke 15: 11-32. In one moment the boy is saying, "I will arise and go to my father" and in the very same verse that tells us that the boy "arose, and came to his father," we are told that "his father saw him a great way off and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him." What a lesson for anybody who wants to come to God, whether a lost sinner who wants salvation, or a backslider who wants his blessing renewed and his joy restored, it is only one step to the Father's house! Oh, believe me, if you honestly in your heart confess your sin to God, He will forgive you and cleanse you in a moment.

Be sure that you do not excuse your sin. Be sure that you do not make an alibi for it and cover it over. Any honest confession will mean you have a penitent heart that turns from your sin with shame.

And if you feel like weeping you may weep. I suppose the prodigal boy wept when he came home. I know that when I was a backslider and seemed a long way from God, I wept as I came back to confess my failures, my sins. But remember this, that whether there is weeping or no weeping, God wants honest heart confession of your sin. And when you have confessed your backsliding, your coldness, your lack of joy, why then you ought to believe that God has forgiven it as He promised, and that He has cleansed it.

I think it would help you if you would get on your knees and read the fifty-first Psalm and let that divinely inspired prayer be the heart-cry of your own soul. It is the prayer of David, a backslider, and you might let it be your own, too. But remember this: All you need to do is to make an honest heart confession of your sin to the Father and believe that He forgives you as He promised, and that He cleanses you from all your sins. And then you will have sweet fellowship with the Father.

My six daughters are all different. Each one has her own peculiar virtues and her own peculiar temptations. One is better about one

thing, another is better about another thing. But one of these girls I have never been able to whip very much. For just as certain as she was caught in some sin, some disobedience, she would run and throw her arms around me, weeping, and say, "Oh, daddy, I'm sorry! I'm so sorry! Forgive me, daddy!" And so, if the prodigal son has already returned, why should the Father send bloodhounds after him, and the sheriff? And if the poor backslider is sorry for his sins, and willing to confess them to God should God lay on the lash of chastisement?

So, backslider, come back to God with your hungry heart today and find peace and forgiveness.

There is a life of victory and joy for every Christian, and you may have it. You will find, since you are still a sinner, that you will need daily to commit your sins to God. I John 1:7 says, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." You may walk in the light every day. When a sin appears, confess it quickly to God, ask Him to forgive it, and He does then and there. And so every day you may live in the smile of God's presence, in a conscious communion of His blessed Spirit. You need not wait to fall into outbroken sin and shame, but can have rich blessing and victory every day.

Perhaps some backslider who reads this today is ready to come back to God. It would comfort my heart, and I believe would make the matter more definite, and clear and joyful in your own, if you would write it down and say so. Suppose you write me a letter like the following, or clip out and sign your name to this letter, and send it to me, if you today, dear backslidden Christian, will come back to the Father's house.

### A Backslider's Return

Evangelist John R. Rice  
145 North Hale St.  
Wheaton, Illinois.

Dear Brother Rice:

I have read your message on BACKSLIDERS in *The Sword of the Lord*. I once trusted in Christ as my Saviour, and believe that He forgave them, but I now confess that I have wandered away. I have grieved God by my sins. But I want to come back, and I believe His promise that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). Therefore I here and now sign this statement confessing my backsliding and repenting of my sin. I trust my heavenly Father to forgive me as He promised, and to cleanse me today. By His help I will strive to live to please Him.

Signed .....

Address .....

### A Lost Sinner's Decision

It may be that some poor lost sinner who has never known forgiveness and salvation has read this message. If so, you see what a wonderful salvation God has for sinners, how it is all free. Remember that He promised, "For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life." God loves you. Jesus died for you. Your sins are all paid for. If you will trust Jesus today for forgiveness and salvation, you will never perish, but you will have everlasting life. If you will do that, if you will receive Christ as your own Saviour this very day, will you not write me a letter and say so, or sign this decision blank and send it to me? Evangelist John R. Rice  
145 North Hale St.  
Wheaton, Illinois.

Dear Brother Rice:

I have read your sermon on backsliding. I confess that I am a poor lost sinner. But I believe that Christ died for my sins. Here and now I trust Him to forgive me and save my soul as He promised to do. Today I give Him my heart. I write this as a public confession of my faith in Christ, and mean to live for Christ henceforth.

Signed .....

Address .....